

**K-12 Regional Virtual Campus  
Proposal**

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DETC 630

## **K-12 Regional Virtual Campus**

### **Mission Statement**

The Mission of the K-12 Regional Virtual Campus is to provide learning opportunities for students who are unable to attend a physical classroom due to geographic distance, limited mobility, or other restrictions. We believe in “no boundaries,” and that all children should have access to education to empower them to achieve their dreams. It is our goal that no child shall be deprived the benefits of education and that no child shall be denied access due to race, sex, religion, nationality, or sexual orientation. Using technology, the K-12 Regional Virtual Campus provides various opportunities for student support and interaction and works in conjunction with area school districts to provide students and families with face-to-face support. The K-12 fully-accredited curriculum is designed to provide students with the best solution for success.

### **Introduction**

The K-12 Regional Virtual Campus (RVC) is a collaboration among area school systems and the K-12 Regional Virtual Campus (RVC). Primary and secondary schools serving Districts 1, 2, and 3 are partners in this initiative to provide distance learning targeted to remote students, although available to all district students. The estimated target is approximately 100 total students, with equal dispersion among the grade levels. Key stakeholders include: students, faculty, administrative staff, parents, public and private investors, technologists and other IT staff, including trainers and technical support. The RVC provides the technology for interaction and support, delivering course content, and assessing instructor and student success. The district school systems provide the administrative functions, such as enrolling the students, counseling, permanent record storage, and other operations. In addition, at least one full-time Distance Education (DE) Specialist with the necessary credentials and experience to work as a liaison between the RVC and Districts will be employed by each district. This person may coordinate face-to-face meetings with students for advising, counseling, or other functions as needed. In addition, the DE Specialist provides expertise and guidance to the RVC to ensure that the RVC is adhering to appropriate federal and state educational and literacy guidelines in conjunction with the District school system. RVC graduates will be recognized as if they graduated from their respective school systems. Diplomas will record the name of their area school and be awarded at the same time and with the same designations as awarded to students attending District schools.

### **Requirements**

The RVC is required to provide the necessary technology and other materials needed to deliver online courses. According to Greenhow, Robelia, and Hughes (2009) K-12 learners use Web 2.0 technologies to explore and share information. Young learners enjoy sharing videos, audio files, and information about themselves. Moreover, K-12 educators using Web 2.0 allow learners to explore, create, and share learning experiences in a dynamic environment that capitalizes on the technological skills of young learners (Greenhow, et al., 2009). Therefore,

RVC requires a platform that allows for student-student interaction, teacher-student interaction, and student-content interaction. In order to meet these requirements, RVC will provide the following tools:

- Environment for asynchronous interaction
- Environment for synchronous interaction
- Tool for content development
- Tool for multimedia add-on to course content
- Environment for assessment and individual feedback

#### **Environment for asynchronous interaction**

The RVC will recommend a platform to provide faculty, students, parents and administration and other users the ability to communicate at different times. Components of the platform may include email, conferencing, file sharing, or other such tools. Users may make use of existing email accounts or the RVC email client to be hosted by the Districts. ProBoards Forum (ProBoards, Inc., 2012) is currently being evaluated for conferencing and file sharing. Little to no training is expected for the email client. Minimal training may be needed for the ProBoards Forum, and basic user-orientations and technical support should be provided by the Districts.

#### **Environment for synchronous interaction**

The RVC will recommend a platform to provide faculty, students, and administration the ability to communicate at the same time. Components of the platform may include instant messaging, teleconferencing, audio and video discussions, or other such tools. Cisco WebEx (Cisco, 2012) and Skype (2012) are currently being evaluated as an environment for synchronous interaction. A moderate amount of training may be needed for users to effectively use this tool, and orientation and technical support should be provided by the Districts.

#### **Tool for content development**

The RVC will recommend a technology to deliver, organize, and manage course content that is compatible with the Districts' curricula and meets the accreditation standards set forth by the regional accrediting agency. Wikispaces (2012) is currently being evaluated to house the main course content. Wikispaces (2012) meets the following criteria: reliability, ease of use, hosted by a third party, minimal training needed for course designers, ability to incorporate audio/visual components, and a visually pleasing, intuitive interface. Also, Wikispaces (2012) is designed to be used by K-12 schools and offers group accounts with up to 100 wikis for \$1,000 a year.

**Tool for multimedia add-on to course content**

The RVC will recommend the necessary multimedia add-ons to course content to facilitate learning using a variety of tools. Any additional tools needed to access and operate the technology developed in this project will be provided by the RVC, either directly, or through a third-party arrangement. MIT's K-12 (MIT.edu, n.d.) videos are being evaluated as a multimedia add-on to course content. At this time, it is expected that little to no training will be needed for students, faculty, or other RVC users to employ this tool.

**Environment for assessment and individual feedback**

The RVC will recommend a platform that will provide the faculty and administration at appropriate agencies the ability to effectively assess RVC's performance and the performance of its faculty. In addition, the RVC will provide a secure and confidential method for students to communicate to faculty and administration. RVC is considering EasyTestMaker (2012), SurveyMonkey (2012), Rubistar (4Teachers.org, 2012), and Halogen (Halogen Software, Inc., 2012) as possible solutions for assessment. RVC will present the assessment tools in a training session to online instructors and provide online tutorials for using assessment tools. RVC will transfer student records to the District schools for official grading and permanent storage.

**RVC Development Staff and Designation of Responsibilities**

The RVC development staff and responsibilities are as follows:

Jacklyn Thompson – Developer, Asynchronous and Synchronous environments

Kelly Carter – Developer, Content development and multimedia add-ons

Cindy Lyons – Developer, Assessment tools and project report manager

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